

denly came to a stop, for in front of him rose a bank breast-high.

Here, if anywhere, a sentry should have been placed, and holding his companion's arm James listened intently for some time.

"Mind what you are doing," he said in a whisper; "that is a breastwork, and probably the path is cut away on the other side. Fortunately we are so far down the hill now that there is not much risk of their hearing any slight noise we might make. You stand here till I find out what's on the other side."

James climbed over the breastwork and cautiously let himself go on the other side; he fell some five or six feet.

"Come on," he said in a low voice; "lower yourself down by your arms, I can reach your legs then."

The gap cut in the path was some ten feet across and six feet deep. When with some difficulty they clambered up on the other side they found the path obstructed by a number of felled trees, forming a thick abattis. They managed to climb the steep hillside and keep along it until past the obstruction, then they got on to the path again and found it unbroken to the bottom.

"So far, so good," James said. "Now do you stop here while I crawl forward to the water. The first thing to discover is whether they have a sentinel stationed anywhere near the bottom of this path."

The time seemed terribly long to Middleton before James returned, though it was really but a few minutes.

"All right!" he said as he approached him; "there is no one here, though I can hear some sentries farther up the river. Now you can come forward and have a drink, fortunately the river is high."

After having satisfied their thirst Middleton asked: "Where are you going now? I don't care how far we have got to march, for after that drink I feel ready for anything."